## REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for pointing out the error in the original numbering of the claims. They have been re-numbered. In addition, the claims have been amended to spell-out acronyms. Further, the claims have been amended to eliminate any reference to a "step". Thus, no substantive claim amendments have been made.

The claims have been rejected as allegedly unpatentable over *Bartholomew* (the "639 patent). This rejection is respectfully traversed as explained below beginning with reference to the first independent claim of the pending claims – Claim 13.

### Claim 13

Claim 13 includes the following two actions:

a.  querying at least one directory in order to identify a first voice mail server associated with a caller originating a message and a second voice mail server associated with the recipient of the message; and

b.  determining, based on the identities of the first and second voice mail servers, whether the message may be transferred between the first and second voice mail servers.

The Office Action erroneously found these actions disclosed in the '639 patent. The '639 patent does not, at least, disclose action b which calls for a "determination" of whether the message may be transferred between the first and second voice mail servers based on the identities of the first and second voice mail servers.

None of the citations to the '639 patent made by the Office Action reveal the determination made in action b of Claim 13. The '639 patent does

not make a determination of whether a message <u>may</u> be transmitted between a first voice mail system and a second mail system. Rather, the '639 patent simply determines the existence and identity of the recipient voice mail box. Once the recipient voice mail box is identified, the voice mail message from the sender is routed to the recipient's mailbox without any other decision being made. *See* '639 patent, col. 28, lines 6-13. Thus, there is no determination in the '639 patent of whether the message may be sent to the recipient mailbox. The '639 patent does not teach nor suggest the subject matter of Claim 13. At least for such failure, the '639 patent does not teach nor suggest the claims dependent on Claim 13.

## Claim 19

Claim 19 includes the following action as a requirement:

associating the first voice mail server's identity code with information selected from the group consisting of:
the location of the first voice mail server,
the identity of the first service provider operating the first voice mail server, and
the existence of agreements between the first service provider and other service providers;

The Office Action erroneously found this action to be disclosed in the '639 patent. The Office Action states: "The voice mail server's identity code is associated with the originating address (location) of the first voice mail server as discussed above." The reference of "discussed above" is assumed to refer to the citation of the '639 patent, col. 10, l. 42 – col. 11, l. 7 and col. 27, l. 40 – col. 28, l. 67 with respect to Claim 13. *See* p. 4 of the Office Action. The '639 patent, however, does not associate an identity

9

code of a voice mail server with the location of the voice mail server. The '639 patent makes no reference to any such association.

Further, the '639 patent fails to disclose any association of a voice mail server's identity code with agreements between service providers. The Office Action states this required element is disclosed in the "authorization (validation) steps as discussed in the claim 13 rejection above which signifies an agreement to support mailbox to mailbox transfers between specific voice mail server identity codes." *See* Office Action p. 6. Yet, the Office Action's support for this finding is its own previous statement that: "[a] TCAP query is made from an SSP to an ISCP directory in order to identify whether a first mailbox associated with a caller is 'authorized to communicate mailbox-to-mailbox' and the 'existence and identity of a mailbox for the call number.'" This statement does not disclose the action of Claim 20 relating to the association of a voice mail server's identity code with agreements between service providers. The '639 patent does not disclose nor suggest such an association. Therefore, the '639 patent does not teach nor suggest the subject matter of Claim 19.

### Claim 20

Claim 20 includes the action of determining whether data may be passed between customers' messaging servers using business rules, regulatory rules or both. The customers are associated with different companies, which operate messaging servers that serve different areas.

The '639 patent does not describe nor suggest the required action in Claim 20 of a determination of whether data may be exchanged based on business or regulatory rules or both.

10

The Office Action states that "the exchange of data is governed by business rules such as use of specific interexchanges during certain time periods as discussed in the claim 20 rejection above." Office Action, p. 7 citing the '639 patent, col. 44, lines 42-58 as used in the rejection of claim 20. This citation (nor anything else) in the '639 patent does not support the rejection. The '639 patent does not refer to the exchange of data. Rather, the '639 patent refers to the one-way transfer of information relating to a message based on time of day.

The Office Action fails to reference the required action in Claim 20 of determining "whether the data may be passed between the customers' messaging servers." The '639 patent does not describe nor suggest any action of making a determination whether data may be passed based on rules. In the '639 patent, a global title is translated into a first destination point code during a certain time and into another destination point code during another time. Thus, data is always passed in the '639 patent. There is no determination as to whether it MAY be passed. The '639 patent does not disclose nor suggest the action of determination of whether data may be passed as required by Claim 20. Therefore, the '639 patent does not teach nor suggest the subject matter of Claim 20 nor any claims dependent on Claim 20.

## Claim 27

Arguments regarding the allowability of the above-referenced claims over the '639 patent may be used to also support of the allowability of Claim 27 over the '639 patent.

In addition, the '639 patent fails to teach or suggest required elements of Claim 27. For example, Claim 27 requires "a directory that stores the

11

identity of the two or more messaging servers". The citations to the '639 patent do not demonstrate that the '639 patent teaches or suggests this element. The ISCP of the '639 patent associates a "routing label" in its response, which does not correspond to the referenced claim element. Thus, the '639 patent does not teach nor suggest the subject matter of Claim 27.

## Claim 28

The Office Action refers to its rejection of other claims in the rejections of Claim 28 and 30. At least for the reasons the other claims were erroneously rejected, so too are Claim 28 (as well as its dependent claim) and Claim 30 erroneously rejected.

## Conclusion

For at least the reasons above, which identify specific claim limitations and patentable distinctions over the '639 patent, claims 13 - 30 are allowable. The '639 patent does not disclose nor teach each and every limitation of these claims. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of and allow such claims.

Respectfully Submitted,

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12